

McCann Road Bridge
Over the Thornapple River
Hastings vicinity
Barry County
Michigan

HAER No. MI-17

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service
Mid-Atlantic Regional Office
U. S. Department of the Interior
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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McCann Road Bridge

HAER No. MI-17

Location: Over the Thornapple River in Section 31
Irving Township, Hastings vicinity, Barry County, Michigan

UTM: 16.629785.4727360
Quad: Hastings, Michigan

Date of Construction: 1892. New deck - 1950s.

Builder/Designer: Samuel Ramsey & Company of Portland, Michigan

Present Owner: Barry County Road Commission
P. O. Box 158
1845 W. Gun Lake Road
Hastings, Michigan 49508

Present Use: Vehicular Bridge

Significance: The McCann Road Bridge is the oldest and one of the few multi-span, pin connected, Pratt pony highway bridges surviving in Michigan. It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1985.

Project Information: This documentation was undertaken in May 1986 in accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement with the Barry County Road Commission, as a mitigative measure prior to the demolition of the bridge.

Don Wolf
Acting Manager
Barry County Road Commission
Hastings, Michigan

Edited, Retyped
and Transmitted by: Jean P. Yearby, HAER, 1987

The McCann Road Bridge over the Thornapple River is located in Section 31 of Irving Township, Barry County, Michigan. Approximately 400 feet south of the bridge is the small community of Irving. The bridge is located halfway between the major Thornapple River communities of Middleville and Hastings. The McCann Road Bridge is the only crossing of the Thornapple River between Hastings and Middleville. Not only does the bridge provide access to the north side of the river for the residents of Irving, it also is used by farmers on both sides of the river for access to markets and fields. It is typical of the many "farm to market" bridges built during the late 1800s in the rural areas of Michigan.

The bridge is located immediately downstream from a flow regulating structure. During normal river flows, water in the Thornapple River is directed to a millrace. This millrace crosses under McCann Road approximately 300 feet south of the bridge. Water in the millrace feeds a power station located downstream from the McCann Road Bridge. Only during period of peak river flow does water flow under the McCann Road Bridge.

The original plans for the bridge were destroyed. The bridge's nameplate indicates the bridge was constructed in 1892. Information from the nameplate indicates that the contractor for the bridge was Samuel Ramsey & Co. of Portland, Michigan. Samuel Ramsey & Co. was a bridge builder whose name appears on several southern Michigan truss bridges.

During the 1950s, the original wood deck on the bridge was replaced. The new deck consists of steel corrugated plans overlain with asphalt.

The bridge is a two-span, steel through truss with riveted and bolted connections. Each truss has four panels, each 15 feet long, for a total truss span of 60 feet. The top chords and endpost members consist of one 10-inch-wide steel top plate riveted to two 5-inch channels. The laced vertical members consist of two 4-inch channels. The diagonals and bottom chords are steel eyebars. The three floor beams are 19-inch deep I-beams. The truss has an overall height of 7 feet. The bridge is a Pratt pony truss.

The distance between parallel trusses is 14 feet. The clear width of the bridge is 13.5 feet.

The bridge's center pier consists of two 30-inch diameter steel pilings, spaced 16 feet apart. An 18-inch deep I-beam runs between the pilings and is attached to the top of the pilings. The I-beam supports the deck stringers.

The abutments are constructed of field stone. Cement mortar has been placed in the interstices of the stones.

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The McCann Road Bridge is typical of most bridges built in southern Michigan around the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Because the truss superstructure was relatively lightweight, it was fabricated at a steel fabrication plant and shipped by rail to the job site. The contractor constructed the substructure units and then assembled and erected the steel truss. The wood deck was also placed by the contractor, using wood plank obtained from a local saw mill.

ADDENDUM TO:
McCANN ROAD BRIDGE
Spanning the Thornapple River at McCann Road
Hastings Vicinity
Barry County
Michigan

HAER No. MI-17

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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
National Park Service
Northeast Region
Philadelphia Support Office
U.S. Custom House
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

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HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
ADDENDUM TO:
McCANN ROAD BRIDGE

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(Page 4)

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Addendum To:
McCann Road Bridge
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